

ADDENDUM
to
The Autobiographical
brochure
of a
Never-was



Being
a DISCOGRAPHY of
Original Compositions/Recordings
And Further Excursions into Guitar-Building
by K. Hagen

Lofi...

A selection of home recordings of dubious quality, considered DEMOS. (A.K.A. "Sketches for Songs and Such")



- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Another Bad Mood | 11. winter requiem/blues at 4 o'clock |
| 2. The Flying Dream | 12. Vocabulary of Rhymes |
| 3. muzak | 13. sometime after 4 |
| 4. sheer annoyance | 14. Cat with Oars |
| 5. Slide/hippety-hop | 15. Blue Flame |
| 6. Mrs. Johnson | 16. Get a Move On |
| 7. she's got that kind of... | 17. Thinking of Her |
| 8. boogie woogie in Bolivia | 18. Nonsense |
| 9. expired | 19. Busy Signals |
| 10. How 'bout You? | 20. Long-haired Winter |

Early Days: mid-1980s. First 4-track cassette recorder: a used Tascam Porta 01. Keys and Beats: Casio MT-52 (get used to it!). Realistic cardioid microphone. Guitars: home-made electric; Harmony archtop with pickup added; '70s Fender Mustang; PushMe-PullYou bass. Amps: c.1967 Guild Thunder I Reverb; Peavey Backstage 110. Assorted effects and a certain degree of youthful enthusiasm... Recordings made in bedroom and basement of the "Green House". Track 10 features mono reel-to-reel distortion effect.



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Somethings Are Just Weird | 12. Cave People |
| 2. Going Home | 13. Dinner is Served |
| 3. entitled to anonymity (sea level) | 14. The Man |
| 4. More than Blue | 15. The Somnambulator |
| 5. For Madmen Only! | |
| 6. Inside My Head | |
| 7. Into the Flowers | |
| 8. Aint that Right | |
| 9. Sincerely Manic | |
| 10. reverberate | |
| 11. The Strangest Thing | |

The '80s continue. New guitar: 1964 Gretsch 6118 Double Anniversary with two-tone smoke-green finish. New pedal: DOD Stereo Chorus. Recording locations in the Green House expanded to include the cathedral-esque attic... (Experiments with jostled reverb tank and Tupperware percussion). Pop, blues, psychedelic rock&roll and even a flirtation with Stax/-Motown... Track 5 is indebted to Hermann Hesse and 9 owes its lyrics to a frustrated friend, away at university.

Track 3 might be the only recording here featuring the Gibson Moderne that was subsequently traded in for "Fred" (the green Gretsch).



1. Relax
2. Death
3. deep-sea frolicsome
4. beans
5. Candlelight and Shadows
6. Beauty Marks
7. Birdman
8. The Wasp
9. Cat Story
10. Way Down Below
11. feckless
12. eternity

13. Natalie's Shroud
14. The Chain-smoker
15. Remember/-
Evaporation
16. Come, Tomorrow/-
The Reluctant Soldier
17. The End (or is it?)
18. Etruscan Head

Another new guitar: the Decophone, made from an Epiphone 12-string neck and some mahogany, with sections of poured plaster as a bridge base and as a decorative element. (The body was inspired by the shape of a '68 Volvo ignition key.)

Story-songs prompted by after-dark radio dramas and random spinning of the dial... Ambient feedback and attempts at building textures, with little concern for the noise. Never even knew what a limiter was, though there was some use of a compression pedal here and there. Also, backwards guitar continues to delight and inspire...



1. Doing Time
2. F is for Filler
3. Naiades
4. Down
5. dawn
6. Underneath the Yellow
Moon
7. The Rain
8. Only When it Rains
9. Nothing to Say
10. Always or Never

11. Tonight
12. House of Love
13. tonight (reprise)
14. intro.
15. thing
16. Zombeely-bye
17. & another thing

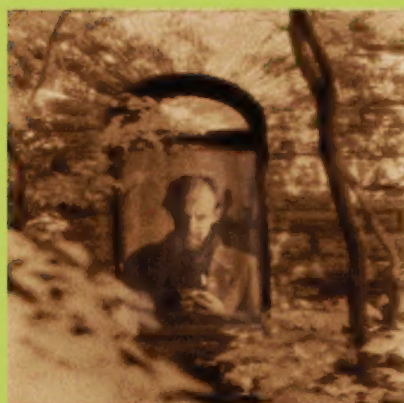
Late 1980s. Working nights - sleeping during the day. The inspiration for writing and recording music was generally just to do something... fill time and fill up tapes. Any tapes, often recording over other things - not trying to get it perfect - just get it down and try to keep things fairly spontaneous, sometimes starting the backing track before the song-writing is even finished. Ideas spring from books, letters, fantasy, mythology, despair, and dark humor.



- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Lay it Down | 12.Intro... |
| 2. Afterlife | 13.Endymion |
| 3. Sidewalks | 14.interludes: dark to light |
| 4. Winter Rain | 15.Dreams of Bliss |
| 5. untitled | 16.D-A+7 |
| 6. Falling Afternoon | 17.The Bells? |
| 7. Traces of Remembrance | 18.Em 2-note |
| 8. bridge thing | 19....finale. |
| 9. Before the Morning | 20.Yes, I Know |
| Passes Away | 21.Filosophunk |
| 10.the room | 22.Soundly |
| 11.magic box (excerpt) | |

The 'nineties begin somewhere in here, by track 9 or 10, and the Green House is a thing of the past. Tracks 12-19 constitute an attempt at the "mini-opera" concept. Known as "Endymion Asleep" it tells the story of the sleeping shepherd and his seduction by Selene, goddess of the moon. Or, at least, that was the vague intention... New Amplifier: 1970s Fender Twin Reverb (a tax refund well-spent). Somewhere along the line the old Tascam 4-track started to peter out and it was replaced with an inferior Porta 05. Real drums on 12 and 19! -(-played by a roommate formerly known as Byron.)

Enter: the wah pedal... and, at some point, a new/old amp: a '67 Gretsch 6169 Fury. ...pawn shops aren't what they used to be.



- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. brand new filler | 11.renaissance filler |
| 2. groovy | 12.pipe organ filler |
| 3. Nothing to Do | 13.jazz filler |
| 4. Automatic Girl | 14.min. proc. filler |
| 5. the autumn palace | 15.punk filler |
| 6. A Brief Encounter | 16.ramble |
| 7. swing in blue | 17.By My Side |
| 8. exp one | 18.Cloud Chamber Blues |
| 9. exp two | 19.plunkentwang |
| 10.angels | 20.the guardian |
| | 21.bms reprise |

It's hard to tell where one was living at any given time... The Autumn Palace was the second and third storeys of what was a pretty grand house in its day, fallen on hard times and residing in a fairly grim neighborhood. Track 5 features old friend and roommate, Kurt, on drums in the dining room. The Cloud Chamber was an efficiency apartment on the third floor of The Cheslakee overlooking a very pleasant city square park. Both were named by another old pal, Mike. At least four different residences are represented on this playlist.

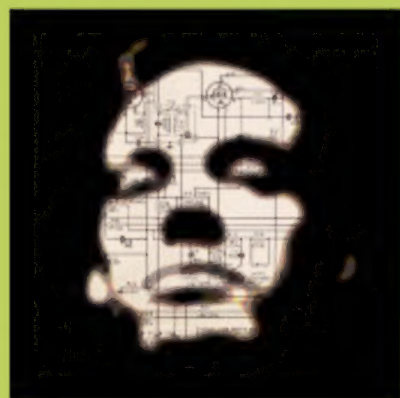
Tracks 11-15 were attempts at taking a single, simple melody/chord progression and adapting it to different musical styles. ("min. proc." stands for "minimalist processional")

New instrument: a six-string electric guitar with cigar-box body. So much fun that the Decophone received a new, dual-cig-box body, and a three-box body was devised for the old Harmony neck (that body getting an Ecko bass neck). And the mystery of electronics was first encountered with the construction of an MXR Distortion+ clone.



1. when i die
2. London surf
3. ya-lo-tech-no
4. last thing
5. spythemesurfably
6. Oliver's Garden
7. **Burning Gasoline**
8. Why Should it Be?
9. Cashmere Banquet
10. evolution
11. Hole in My Pants
12. You & Me & April
13. last ditch potpourri (version 2)
14. Thingumywhatsit
15. How to be Idle (my life, my way)
16. **SuperHeroine Theme**
17. mini-operetta (sketch)

Tracks 1-4 are a continuation of the previous project (which begins at track 16 above). Tracks 5-13 encompass part of the "filling the gaps" project known as "Rehash". Recorded on 4-track cassette, mid-2005. Most of the songs date back to pre-multi-track days. 12 was a new one, based on a dream and a bossa nova beat from the Partner 15 rhythm box of an old Farfisa organ found in an alley. The organ needs a lot of work. The song could use some too. 13 was a home-made electronics showcase/experimental piece featuring many friends and acquaintances via old tapes and a digital answering machine. Track 16 was written for friend, Mike, in 2007, but was never used for its intended purpose...



8-track Experiments:

1. Glass Dream Notes
2. mood swing
3. vibrophilia
4. mood swing II
5. intuitonomy

Back to the year 2000 (-/01)... New gear: A used Tascam 388 8-track tape recorder. "Dream Notes" refers to an on-going experiment with dream memories recited into a mono tape recorder upon waking. Groggy voice mumbling jumbled subconscious psychadelia... love it. And water-level-tuned wine glasses. Can't get enough of those. And who can resist sounds performed with battery-powered vibrators (track 3)? The full - and very pretentious - title of track 5 is "Symphonie Automatique: Intuitonomy". Another early 8-track experiment, it was conceived in four stereo passes being: #1: distortion pedal with feedback loop; #2: ditto; #3: 1962 Hofner Club 40 through digital delay; and #4: bowed hollowbody electric bass through cranked digital reverb. It takes thirty minutes of one's life to get to the end. The beauty of ambient music is that you can do other things while it's playing. (Thank you, Mr. Eno.)

Some better microphones come into play... and a DR-770 drum machine.

C-sides and Deformities



1. rhapsody in budapest
2. something about you
3. wonce
4. psycho tuesday
5. spontaneous combustion
6. public transportation
7. arid lands/floridor
8. Eva Portends
9. born to be a tragedy
10. you are there
11. the brush
12. (whine)
13. crazy
14. instrumental-tape 5.3
15. The Only Girl For Me
(MD original)

These are 4-track demos (and one digital mini-disc recording) that didn't quite fit the previous eight collections of Demos. Recording dates range from 1986/7 to the early '90s - and the last one is from about 2006?



1. More Than Blue
2. Dear Diary
3. acoustic thing
4. Blue Flame
5. acoustic 'exp two'
6. Why Should it Be?
7. thunder I
8. batteries running low
9. evolution I
10. evolution II
11. Physical Spirituality
12. teang-tone-teounge
13. ode to Hyata
14. Plus ca Change
15. The Fly
16. '36'
17. Castle Strange
18. Hole in My Pants

Flashback to the beginning... These early recordings set the stage for the lofi experience. Early 1980s. One or two mono cassette recorders with built-in mics or cheapies plugged in. First electric guitar: a mail order no-name Strat knock-off. (First acoustic guitar cost 75 cents at the neighbor's garage sale - with the Beatles' "Live at the Star Club" album thrown in! - German pressing.) Sound-on-sound recording. One dollar might buy two cheap cassettes. Or was it four?

Track 14 was the first extended concept piece, performed live, in one take. 15 is one of several works composed around the words of William Blake. 16 is from the "Tao Te Ching". Track 17 was the first 4-track recording on Kurt's Fostex. And the last one is an early 4-track from an audio letter to Mike, who also provided the impetus for "evolution" - which was an idea for a t.v. show (?). Always have had an interest in theme music.



Imaginary Soundtrack No. 1 - Vampire Suite:

1. 1st & 2nd Movements

2. **aside**

3. 3rd Movement

4. conclusion

Imaginary Soundtrack No. 2 - MONSTER!:

5. introduction

6. theme

7. a night out

8. lab scene

9. pastoral theme

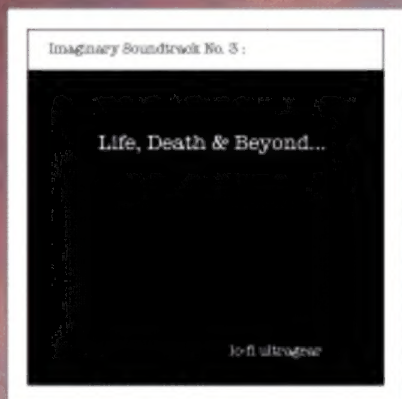
10. battle scene

11. **finale**

New stuff in 2001: a Korg sampler, mini-disc recorder, and a stereo condenser mic. "Vampire Suite" was the excuse to try them out... It has as much to do with dreams as it does Christopher Lee movies. "Monster!" is mostly Godzilla and Ultraman. There's no particular narrative for either, just an idea to base a series of soundscapes on.

New ways of creating noise and arranging sounds. Playing out with bands and other, noisier collaborations beginning around '02. Also starting to build experimental instruments and more electronic circuits.

New gear includes: sitar, tenor banjo, Indonesian anklung, electric toy harmonium, clay hand drums, Indian shepherd's bell, and ukulele, as well as a multi-effects processor (and a pot of boiling eggs).



Imaginary Soundtrack No. 3 - Life, Death & Beyond:

part one: **Life in a Day** ----- tracks 1 - 11

part two: Death & Beyond - track 12.

2003, and the Imaginary Soundtrack takes on a new dimension. Toys! Also, an early 1940s Airline 78rpm disc cutter! Talk about lofi... This is the first true Album of material. Mostly instrumental, "Life in a Day" is a semi-autobiographical journey through a day in the life as it relates to a life in its entirety. Dreaming, waking, eating, commuting, working, day-dreaming, sex and spirituality... ..and death.

The conclusion, "Death and Beyond", didn't come about until 2006, when life got more and less complicated at the same time and new gear included home-made octave mandolins and a new-found appreciation of fatalism... and an exploration into medieval music. The opening melody is a backwards rendition of an anonymous 'Hail Mary' leading us into real church bells, fading into a Fellini- and Allen-esque train ride of the departed which takes us to the cosmic realm of the Great Unknown (!)... Short wave radio signals provide the backdrop for this agnostic view of the afterlife. And a bittersweet ukulele melody finishes off the virtual journey.

(The 8-track reel-to-reel went on the fritz before, during, and after this project, so the first mixes remain the only ones for the time being.)



Imaginary Soundtrack No. 4:

1. intro...
2. Title Theme (11a)
3. Urban Cool/Western Heat
4. Overcast
5. Scene 11b
6. Zisus?
7. Partly Cloudy
8. Galumphing
9. Mostly Clear
10. fog/Beneath the Willow Trees
- 11...outro.

12. Happy Sunny Day.

Noise For Tots:

13. thingy-guitarang/
u.m.synth-bowbox
14. multi-string & prongs
15. peep shows
16. Sleepless Night
17. Dysthymia
18. Batty for Betty

Enter the age of the computer... Finally got a working setup, albeit rudimentary. A used desktop Mac with Tracktion2 and Cubase LE and a used Tascam USB interface. 2008 saw a return to school, studying Sound Art. Frustration with the pace of things led to this group of recordings (1-11) as a sort of audio portfolio to demonstrate soundtrack potential. Track 6 features Ian on drums and shouting and Kurt somewhere in the background (guitar and chuckle) along with a new favorite instrument: a homemade synthesizer.

Track 12 was written for a scene in a student film that was never shown publicly, to my knowledge, and features melodica.

"Noise For Tots" (2007) was a return to the 4-track and conceived as a showcase for the various home-made electronic and acoustic instruments and effects built after the recording of "Life in a Day." (All in glorious low fidelity...)



THE EXPONENTIAL PROGRESSION OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Overture: | Fall of Rome/Advent of Islam |
| 2. Prehistory: | 4. The Common Era: |
| Migration | Middle Ages |
| Dispersion | Renaissance |
| The Agricultural Village | Enlightenment |
| Advent of Civilization/ | Industrial Revolution |
| -Deluge | 5. An Ode to Invention |
| 3. Archaic Period: | 6. Finale: |
| Ancient Civilization | fog/Beneath the Willow |
| The Axial Age | Trees |

Sound Arts final project piece from 2010. Recorded on Mac using ProTools and a Windows laptop with Cubase and some 4-track reel-to-reel (track 5) as well as mini-disc here and there.

Homemade instruments used in the recording include: WP-20 cigar box synthesizer, cookie-tin fiddle, mandolin, octave mandolin, electric 6-string and bass guitars, "guilutar", and "hurdy-lele".

Guest drummer Jim B. on track 6 and Tamara K. assisted on tracks 1 and 6.



1. Couldn't Care Less
2. EveryDaysValentine's Day
3. FAB
4. Horror of the Heights
5. Riding No. 7
6. Avalon
7. Rock 'n' Roll Curse
8. 11b Orchestron
9. Shambles
10. Theater Organ Mix
11. In the Garden
12. A Descent Into the Maelstrom
13. Wintertime (to a cat named Isis Klaw)
14. 1485 kHz
15. (kitchen table sketch)

Tracks 1-7 were completed in 2013 and 8-14 in 2014, with a final demo added for good measure. The orchestrations were added via the MuseScore program. Recorded on Windows laptop with Cubase.

1. Ides of May
2. Spider Attack
3. Summer Solstice (2023)
4. Gone Fishing for Electrons
5. Nothing to do with Halloween
6. AntiAncientArcticTech
7. In Memoriam
8. Autumnal Equinox - 2023
9. The Only Girl for Me - 2024
10. Stop and Smell the Sulphur
11. Shortwave



Most-recent recordings, to date. 2017-24. Track 1 was recorded on an iPhone5, May 15, 2017. The rest have been recorded on iPad, with built-in microphone, mostly for use in videos demonstrating homemade musical instruments, devices and effects.

NOTE:

I like guitars. I like looking at them at least as much as playing them. I don't enjoy building guitars as much as I enjoy having the finished product to hold and play and Look At.

I like electronic circuits. To look at, to draw, and try to understand. Effect pedals and noise-makers and amplifiers...

Of course, I enjoy making music. More specifically, I enjoy making recordings of original sounds to suit my own particular, and often peculiar, tastes. Having recordings that span the majority of my time on this planet is better than any photo album.

Videos are just fun. Everything I do is lo-fi and mostly inexpensive and attempting to satisfy a creative urge... including making a Book.



My original intention was to build a small-bodied, arch-top, acoustic guitar for my friend, Kurt. I had a block of quarter-sawn spruce-like wood and some nice, 3/32" thick walnut, rosewood fretboard and mahogany for a neck. It just wasn't working out - and Kurt died.

Sometime between 2018 and 2021 I managed to put together a six-piece, molded-arch, soft fir-like top with walnut sides and a plywood back (no arch). I guess that top needed more bracing because, when I tried to string it up with light bronze acoustic strings... No More Arch! Luckily, it now holds up under the strain of light electric strings.

It was the Spring of 2022 when I thought I should build a sort of tribute guitar for my lost friend. As seniors in high school we built our first electric guitars in his dad's garage. I ended up with the neck from Kurt's original project and found it nice and straight and strong, even considering it has no truss rod in the single slab of maple.

The body's top is thin plywood he was going to use for something else and the rest of the body came from a thicker plywood I used to make a bending and molding frame for other guitars. The neck and bridge humbuckers are from some '70s Japanese guitar he had and the middle one I picked up cheap - just to get three in there.

To cover the sides I used gray, rubberized, slip resistant tape.





In 2021 I ordered three slabs of roasted pine wood and carved the arch-top solid-body here, to the left, in '22.

The neck is mahogany. A rosewood fretboard. It has Gretsch-inspired pickups (I tend to refer to this guitar as the "DynaTron-S") with individual on/off switches and a Treble Boost circuit built into the lower control cavity.

The guitar on the right was built the same year. The "Grefner Mark II" is all-maple - with rosewood fretboard - and the bridge is now all rosewood as well.

It has a lower bout of 14 1/4" and was designed by drawing the outline of a Hofner Club body inside the outline of a Gretsch 6118 and splitting the difference between the two. The depth of the body also splits the difference - at 2 1/4".





This late-'60s Eko Florentine bass neck has been attached to a few bodies over the years. This one was constructed from the pine cutoff sides of the DynaTron guitar, sandwiched between a top and back of Masonite/hardboard. A copper pipe runs from neck to tail blocks and firmly through a solid bridge block.

The pickup is a mystery - it's a cheap, high-output Japanese thing given to me by a friend who didn't remember the make or model of that bass.

Below is the rectangle guitar that's been around since 2009. I've recently added binding to the body, switched gold-foil pickup, carved a deer antler bridge, and added a maple bridge block.

Let's see... The mahogany neck is hollow beneath a cherry fretboard. The body is a combo of mahogany and sapele. The Kluson tuners are from the same late-'50s Magnatone Mark V as the pickups.





Above is the latest incarnation of the "PushMe-PullYou" bass I put together in the 1980s.



This Stratocaster-style body I constructed from a single, large slab of $\frac{3}{4}$ " rosewood. The top and back are chambered and were glued up with a $\frac{1}{8}$ " layer of maple between them.

The tuners, pickguard and electronics came from my friend, Kurt's stash of parts - including a small "Tube Driver" circuit controlled by the lower tone knob. The neck is a Mighty Mite with a stained headstock face.





The 12-string Epiphone neck came from the "Decophone" body I built in the 1980s. Then, in the '90s, I put together this two-cigar-box body. In 2023 I installed the Gibson humbucker and added the extension for a knee-rest and better balance. It still needs a shim in the neck



My first electric guitar was a cheap, mail-order Strat copy with a plywood body and a thin, rosewood veneer on a mahogany-esque neck.

The acoustic guitar I built some years ago was going to have a walnut back - until I tried to mold an arch into it and it took on a will of its own.

In the late summer of 2023 these things came together in this hollowbody tenor electric. Walnut top, maple sides, plywood back and a stripped and re-fretted 'Strat-o-Line' neck.

Eko tailpiece and Chinese Hofner bass pickups.

A project I've been meaning to re-build:
An 18-key, polyphonic, electronic organ circuit -
once a part of the "Organitar". It wasn't very
playable when it had wooden keys positioned
over clunky pushbuttons.

Now, I have touch-sensitive key-boxes and
full-sized keys (pulled from an old Yamaha) and
extra possibilities for additional triggering...

Another idea has been to incorporate it -
somehow - into...



...a mechanical hurdy gurdy.

Both of these projects were begun in
2006. How and why I've let this sit so long,
I don't know. Of course, I've thought of
motorizing the bowing wheel -- adding the
organ circuit -- even attempting a sort of
lira organizzata - with a bellows and a set
of wooden organ pipes I've had since '05.

How much of this is ever likely... I just
can't say. I guess it's nice to hang onto
Possibilities.



